

NRO & USAF REVIEWS
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21 11 1962

MEMORANDUM FOR : Mr. Richard M. Bissell, Jr.
SUBJECT : Topics for Decision on Special Projects

1. National Reconnaissance Office and Program

The existing NRO need be either abolished or made workable by policy agreement between the principals and procedural agreement between the respective staffs.

Dr. Charyk and Dr. Scoville both now appear to favor continuance of NRO. Reaffirmation of NRO is required probably by both the Secretary of Defense and DCI. Presuming this, a policy agreement by the principals could be followed by a reinstitution and negotiations on procedures by the respective staff officers.

In order to maintain a management role for this Agency in present and future programs, it may be well to provide that certain programs could be conducted entirely unilaterally by either organization and that for joint programs a complimentary pooling of resources be employed for management.

It would be highly desirable for all NRO assignees to be in one city and not in one office.

This Agency should not agree to a role of responsibility only for security and procurement actions.

2. Authority over OXCART Operations

Full control for all aspects of IDEALIST have been vested in this Agency in order to preserve the fundamental of plausible denial. If OXCART operational control is relinquished this is lost and in view of USAF sponsored variants the developmental control would shift, in fact to the USAF.

Base support activity might be under military command; however, the operational activities, longer time developments, control of contractor activities and related matters must have a clear and clean command channel to Washington.

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4. Future Role of CIA in Satellite Reconnaissance:

This matter is subject to agreements made in context of NRO. This Agency, by comparison, has limited assets for programs as complex and costly as present satellite system.

However, this Agency is able to serve in the way of an expert consultant in matters relating to quality and data obtained, overall merits of alternate courses and developments, security considerations, and focusing of operational and developmental activities on the more important rather than on unimportant intelligence problems.



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Attachment: Check List

Eugene P. Kiefer:SA/TA/DPD ☐ (26 February 1962)

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